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## ***"Pre-1997 Trends in Welfare and Food Assistance in a National Sample of Families"***

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***"Pre-1997 Trends in Welfare and Food Assistance in a National Sample of Families"***  
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The Food Stamp Program (FSP) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) both saw unprecedented caseload growth from the late 1980s until 1994, followed by caseload declines. These rapid caseload declines are attributed to changing macroeconomic conditions and to substantial changes in program design. This article uses data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) to investigate participation transitions. The distinctive feature of the approach is that it considers all possible transitions at the individual level among three participation states — "AFDC" (with or without the FSP), "FSP Only", and "Neither" — rather than treating each program separately.

The results suggest that macroeconomic conditions affect transitions from cash and non-cash programs in roughly the same direction. A logistic regression analysis finds as expected that a higher unemployment rate decreases the probability of exit from both program participation categories to "Neither," and increases the probability of entry from "Neither" to both program participation categories. A more surprising result is that a higher unemployment rate increases the probability of a transition from "AFDC" participation to "FSP Only."

